



City of Helena

GOLF ADVISORY BOARD SUMMARY December 8, 2015



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|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pete Aspinwall | <input type="checkbox"/> Christopher DeVerniero <i>excused</i> |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dave Bauer | <input type="checkbox"/> Arthur Pembroke <i>excused</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kelly Casey <i>excused</i> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lynn Staley |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Andy Cottrell <i>excused</i> | |

Ex-Officio Members

- ☒ Larry Kurokawa, Golf Course Superintendent
- ☒ Scott Longenecker, Head Golf Pro
- ☒ Amy Teegarden, Parks and Recreation Director
- ☒ Jennifer Schade, Recorder

LOCATION: City-County Building, Room 426 (LUNCH WILL BE SERVED)

TIME: 11:45 A.M. – 1:00 P.M.

Visitor(s): Ron Alles, City Manager

1. Call to order/establish quorum/review agenda

Chairman Pete Aspinwall called the City of Helena Golf Advisory Board Meeting to order at 11:45. By noon a quorum was present.

2. Approval of minutes: November 10, 2015

After review of the minutes, Lynn moved to approve the November 10, 2015 minutes as presented. Pete seconded. Motion carried.

3. Unfinished business

Review of RFI's - All

- Amy stated that she received four proposals from our RFI – she has not yet reviewed them. We won't take action today. From the proposals we have received, we should get a good idea from the golfing consultants what services they provide. Based on information we received, we will be able to move forward and draft our RFP.
- Amy is open to recommendations in moving forward with the RFI's we received. As there are three members absent today, Amy stated she will have Jennifer scan and email the proposals to the members not in attendance.
- Pete proposed that we take this next month to review and highlight responses we feel meet our qualifications and then make recommendations. We can go through each RFI at the next meeting and make a final decision as a committee.
- Amy did mention that PROS Consulting is not a typical golf consultant – they are actually more of a recreation business planner (which could be useful to us in the future).

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- Amy again said she has not yet reviewed the RFI's in their entirety, but will definitely look through them.
- Scott has reviewed the RFI's and stated that one group really gets what we are looking for. That company is Paradigm. They took the time to call and had a lengthy conversation with Scott. There were two other proposals that looked viable. He was not impressed with the last proposal. Scott then stated the two that stood out the most to him were Paradigm and NGF Consulting. NGF included examples of projects they have completed and even made a recommendation against expansion in one area (which Scott appreciated).
- Pete – we will make this an action item. We will take this next month to review the proposals, make notes, and document strengths. Our next Advisory Board meeting will be designated to our discussion/decision.

ACTION ITEM: Committee members will take this next month to review the proposals, make notes, and document strengths. Our next Advisory Board meeting will be designated to our discussion/decision.

4. New business

Review of 2015 Accomplishments

- Amy distributed a handout that highlights the accomplishments for the 2015 season. These accomplishments included:
 - Construction of an illuminated golf course sign and landscaping to improve curb appeal. Dave has heard great comments about the sign.
 - Re-landscaped the pro shop and clubhouse grounds improving appearance.
 - Refreshed the old and outdated appearance of the pro shop by re-staining the pro shop exterior and installing a new front entry door.
 - Built a forward tee box on hole #4 at the request of the women's league.
 - Golf Pro Scott Longenecker was named the 2014 WMCPGA Merchandiser of the Year.
 - Golf merchandise sales increased by \$25,000 and concessions revenues increased by \$28,500.
 - We increased the winter league participation from 30 to 40 teams.
 - Installed 99 new club storage lockers. The lockers transformed the locker room.

Goals

- We need to replace 6 pieces of maintenance equipment. We have extended the life of this equipment as far as we can. We have our CCIP planning this week and will be looking at the cost.
- Identify golf course building improvements and priorities. Create a timeline along with a funding plan. The results of the ADA audit will play a huge part in some of the decisions we make. We will need to discuss deficiencies at the January and/or February meeting. Ron added that it is important to keep parking and landscaping in mind as we move forward with this. Larry stated that the next phase may be "reconstruction" – we will need landscaping and islands.
- Review and plan for the next entrance beautification phase.
- Develop a fairway management strategy to address soil compaction and related turf growing conditions and symptoms.

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- High canopy trim work on mature poplar trees for reasons of safety and playability. This will most likely be contract work. Per Larry – we will take down dangerous branches. Nitro-Green has given us a quote of \$3,200 - \$3,300 with a discount if we do the work in the winter.
- Mitigate collapsing retaining wall next to Four Georgians School.
- Reclaim over-extended golf trails – the turf is worn out and subsequently the paths are extended. They are growing out into the playing area. Many can be moved on (2 and 11 in particular). This is something we need to budget for. The gravel cart paths are in need of maintenance as well.
- Continue to maintain, provide, and improve the golf course facility and golfer experience.

Sign Thank You Cards

- Amy had thank you cards for committee members to sign. One is for Edean Anderson Ihlanfeldt and the other potentially for Steve Keim. Andy is double checking to see if we need to send one to Steve, or anyone else. Those present signed the cards. We will contact the members not in attendance to get their signatures.

ACTION ITEM: **Jennifer will contact the members not in attendance to get their signatures on the thank you cards. We will then mail them out.**

5. Reports

Parks and Recreation Director's Report

- Nothing to report.

Golf Superintendent Report

- Larry announced that they are currently completing indoor work (i.e., inventory, early order program, record update, and reports to the state and DNRC for chemical use).
- Driving range mats – some will be replaced this year. We can't replace all of them as they are relatively expensive.
- Dave asked if there is any way we can look at not using the mats on the concrete pad in the driving range during summer and fall. Golfers seem to get frustrated when they have to go back to mats.
- Larry stated he understands and hears the frustrations; however, the excessive use the range makes it difficult to keep quality turf – we try to keep golfers on turf as long as we can. The labor, sand and seed to repair divots everyday can be difficult. Quality sand is very expensive. Larry stated he will put some numbers together.

ACTION ITEM: **Larry will research the costs of labor, sand, and seed.**

Golf Professional Report

- Scott announced that we had 40 winter teams signed up by the 1st week of December. There have been some minor computer glitches, but things are going good. Our Christmas sales are already higher than last year. November was slightly down, but that was because we had to close earlier.
- Season passes were down a little, but green fees were considerably higher. Punch card purchases were up from last year. There is a huge difference in 30-Punch cards – we are

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16% over last year. Power cart rentals were also high – we got a fast start due to the weather so the carts were on the course earlier.

- Sale of concessions – we made \$10,000 more than last year. We were down \$7,000 in expenses – we did great!
 - Amy asked Scott to elaborate on what was done to reduce expenses. Per Scott – less staffing (didn't have as much shrinking this last year) and our cost of goods sold were not as high. We had a lot of beer specials. Beer sales were up from last year – 12,800 more units at a higher price.
- Sale of merchandise – we are up \$37,000 over last year and we are already ahead this month from last year at this time. Golf lesson revenue is up as well. The main reason golf lesson revenue has increased is largely due to Nate Miller and the Wine and Wedges event.
- CCIP is coming up this week. We are still doing orders.
- Lynn asked about the cart barn. How many people do we have waiting for a slot? Per Scott – we have 20 people on the wait list.
- Lynn then asked if Wine and Wedges will run again next year. Scott said that we will continue this event next year – in fact we may run this event a few additional times as it was very well-received. Amy reminded Scott to try the “Pints and Putts” event. This may be a very successful event at our course.
- Dave stated he has a friend whose son started playing golf this spring – the young man took lessons from Nate and he said that Nate was really good, really well liked, and a great communicator. Pete added that Nate is a great addition!
- Scott – Nate is currently going through PGA Certification – he is currently Level 1. Joshua is beginning the process; however, the costs of the certification are more than he can afford at this time. Pete suggested we look at some type of scholarship for Josh. Pete will visit with Josh about this.
- Scott stated we have a full schedule for use of the simulator – women on 10 different teams – all slots are filled.
- Dave asked if our proposed rates were approved. Ron stated the rates were approved.

ACTION ITEM: **Pete will reach out to Josh about the possibility of a scholarship to obtain certification.**

Men's League Report

- Nothing to report

Ladies League Report

- Nothing to report

6. Public comment

7. Next meeting date – January 12, 2016

8. Future agenda items

- RFI Discussion
- Phase II Landscaping Project

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- ADA Report (Amy has asked that this item be moved to the February agenda as the report may not be available until February)

9. Other

- Dave would like to have discussion about putting in trees along Benton. He understands there are grants available to further landscape that area along Benton. Amy asked Larry if we can talk about as part of phase two planning. The last communication Larry had with Growing Friends – their scope is street beautification – we have exhausted the areas in their scope of services. We don't want to plant trees along Custer because the Yellowstone pipeline goes right along our property. The parks department is working on a plan for the area to the south of Batch fields – Larry will visit with Craig. Amy added that we have significant players in our Parks Maintenance Department. They have come in with new ideas and a great sense of pride.
- Pete expressed thanks to the Parks and Recreation Department for not raising golf fees this year. Lynn agreed and added that she has heard many positive comments. Pete also congratulated Scott and Larry for all their hard work. The course this past summer was spectacular.
- Lynn added that she wanted to also thank Mike for everything he does! His cart service is stellar.
- Larry thanked everyone for their positive comments adding that Mike is extending his cart service for 12 months. Once we have a customer on a servicing rotation, it is easier for Mike to handle additional carts.
- Pete then suggested that we create a package for those who own their own carts. We currently have an annual trail fee and maintenance contract – why not make this all inclusive.
- Lynn agreed that this is a great idea. Perhaps a winter and yearly package. In an effort to get the word out about this offer, we could visit with Mike about attaching a flyer to each cart.
- Pete requested a moment of silence for Carol Kirkland who passed away on Sunday.

ACTION ITEM: **Scott will research the possibility of an annual cart servicing contract.**

Adjournment

With no further business, the Golf Advisory Board adjourned at 12:32 pm.

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citycommunitydevelopment@helenamt.gov
 316 North Park, Avenue, Room 440, Helena, MT 59623

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